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*method* of researches in physiology remains the same—and that is the important point.

However, one thing astonishes me, and that is that Mr. Le Dantec, in looking for names to give to the representatives of the two methods of investigation, he adopts that of *psychologists* for all those who refuse a sound scientific method. It would seem to me that, even if some ten or twenty years ago one had any right to classify in this manner in France, to-day it is entirely out of place in the country of Ribot, Pierre Janet, Binet, and other prominent psychologists, as well as in any other.

"Individualism" which he wishes to remove is hardly worth dwelling upon, since its manifest inanity has been recognized by every one. Not only does the *milieu* change from one moment to another, modifying our way of thinking, feeling and willing, but the individual himself who thinks, feels and wills is liable to change; physiological modifications of his being take place with him and influence his mode of psychical reaction; man is not like a stone which ever remains the same.

Let me point out an interesting discussion and successful refutation of the Archæsthetism of the late E. D. Cope of Philadelphia.

I need not to call attention to the lucid article on Physiological Senescence which appeared in the *Revue Philosophique* last year. Senescence is due to the outweighing of the muscular substance by the conjunctive or skeletal substance of the muscle.

A. SCHINZ, PH. D.

(74) *Comment naissent les mythes*. PAUL REGNAUD. Alcan, Paris, 1898, 249 pages.

The sharp contest on the problem of the origin of myths continues. Our author takes his position midway between the philologists of the school of Max Müller, and, more recently, of Oldenberg in Germany, on the one hand, and on the other the psychologists, as Gaidoz in France and especially A. Lang, in England. Mr. Regnaud develops more fully the point of view of Bergaigne, which he had already accepted in his former publications.

The origin of the Indo-European mythology is found in the Vedahs. Simple figures of speech (metaphors) in Vedic hymns were converted into realities or personifications. For instance, *agni*, the soul, before its development is accorded a very small place in the heart of man; it is considered as short as a thumb, thence the name of *poucet*, the little thumb. All the different features of the story, not only the name and the persons, but its very elements are explained in such way. In the Vedic hymns there is no story yet; the imagination only brought together the elements in them, and finally composed the myth of the little thumb.

The same explanation holds good in the case of the Deluge. The idea of such an event has its origin in the substitution of the legend which we all know, to a figurative description of the elements of sacrifice, when the religious act is about to take place or is actually performed.—And the same for other myths.

Any one who would hear such an explanation for the first time will find it hard to accept. However, after having conscientiously read the book of Mr. Regnaud to the end, it seems evident that there is a truth in this theory. But, on the other hand, the author seems to me unjust in his attitude towards the new school, and particularly towards its head, A. Lang. If in the myth here offered for consideration we might possibly agree with Mr. Regnaud, it does not result therefrom that that would be the case everywhere else. The psychological thesis, that the same myths found in dif-

ferent places were formed independently one from the other, according to the uniformity of the thought of man in the different parts of the globe, seems to me just as well applicable to many mythological stories. It is not necessary to presume that all myths have sprung up in exactly the same way. Different theories may be alternatively correct.

A. SCHINZ, PH. D.

- (75) *Problèmes d'esthétique et de morale.* C. R. C. HERCKENRATH. Alcan, 1898, 163 pages.

a. *Æsthetics.* The author tries to arrive at a theory of beauty by way of psychogenesis. The beautiful, he says, consists, with children and savage people, in a simple and ingenuous combination of the elements of the beautiful object, especially color and sound. Gradually the simple becomes tiresome and we look for other and more complicated combinations of colors and sounds. The artist who, during his whole life, is dealing with such matters, acquires a very fine taste which ordinary people do not arrive at. Taste changes, and although not discutable in individuals is capable of progress at any time. "Good taste—that is, the conclusion—is a taste more refined, more cultivated than bad taste" (p. 46).—It is the first time, so far as I know, that intellectual theories have been applied so thoroughly to æsthetics, and I cannot but think that this way of treating the problem of beauty is full of promise. The chapters on the Sublime, on the Problem of the Tragic, and on the Comic Art and Laughing, do not offer the same originality and freshness of thought as the one on the Sense of Beauty, although the intellectual element is also not lacking here.

b. *Ethics.* The chapters grouped under this head, "Le Problème Moral," show a still greater lack of originality. The author evidently has never studied very thoroughly any history of ethics, for if he had, he would have remarked that all his theories are very old. He seems to believe, for instance, that he has found out (by correcting and completing Schopenhauer) that *sympathy* is the irreducible element of morality, while every one knows how often this principle has been advanced as the basis of ethics, and that even often the very word has been used, *e. g.*, Adam Smith. Besides, the intellectual element is not so thoroughly carried through in the second part of the book as it was in the first.

A. SCHINZ, PH. D.

- (76) *La personne humaine.* L'ABBÉ C. PIAT. Alcan, Paris, 1897, 401 pages.

All views and opinions are represented in the excellent collection, "Bibliothèque de Philosophie Contemporaine," of Mr. Alcan. The author of this book is a dignitary of the Roman Catholic Church, who takes up the old idea of human personality and of the soul, and tries to maintain its efficiency on contrast to modern phenomenism. His argumentation takes up 400 pages, but without advancing a single argument that has not been presented a thousand of times before.

I doubt very much whether arguments which were not able to check the progress of modern psychology when advanced for the thousandth time would have this result after the thousandth and first time.

Further, even if one would be perfectly willing to admit that definitive solutions of the problems of the soul or mind have not yet been given, that would certainly not necessarily imply, as Mr. C.